

# The AMERICAN OBSERVER

*A free, virtuous and enlightened people must know well the great principles and causes on which their happiness depends. — James Monroe*



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## Changes Take Place in Britain's Cabinet

**Baldwin Becomes New Prime Minister; MacDonald Steps Out Because of Health**

### NO CHANGE OF POLICY EXPECTED

**Conservatives, Who Have Been in Control, Will Remain at Government Helm**

Great Britain, as well as France, has changed cabinets, but while the change in France was accompanied by serious agitation and disturbance, the shift in England by which Prime Minister MacDonald stepped out, giving way to Stanley Baldwin, was accomplished peacefully and quietly in accordance with a prearranged plan. Ramsay MacDonald, who had been prime minister for six years, called on King George Friday, June 7, had tea with the sovereign, and then presented his resignation. A few minutes later, Stanley Baldwin was called to Buckingham Palace, residence of the king, and was asked to take MacDonald's place.

Baldwin immediately announced that nearly all the old cabinet would be retained in their places. The only important change, aside from the fact that Ramsay MacDonald steps down from the premiership and takes a minor position in the cabinet, merely as a figurehead, is in the foreign office. Sir John Simon is shifted from the office of foreign secretary to that of home secretary and in his place comes Sir Samuel Hoare, who has been secretary for India and who has gained recognition because of his part in working out the plan which has just been adopted for the government of India. A minor place in the cabinet is given to Malcolm MacDonald, son of the retiring prime minister.

There really was no cabinet crisis at all in London. It had long been known that eventually MacDonald would step out. He has been little more than a figurehead for some time. He is growing old, though at 69 he is but 10 months the senior of the man who is to succeed him. But his health is poor. Furthermore, he is a man without a party, and has no large following throughout the country. Since the Conservatives have an overwhelming majority in Parliament, it has long been felt that the legal, as well as the actual head of the government, should be a Conservative. So Stanley Baldwin, who has been prime minister of Great Britain twice before—once in 1923 and another time from 1924 to 1929—comes back to the headship of the cabinet.

### The Background

To understand the present political situation in Great Britain, we should go back a few years, back to the crisis of 1931. The depression, by that time, was affecting the British people severely. Business was very bad. Unemployment, which had been a serious problem in England for 10 years, was mounting. The unemployment benefits which the government was paying to those who were out of work constituted a heavy drain upon the treasury. The budget was unbalanced. Though taxes were heavy, less was being taken in than was being spent. Under the circumstances, many people became fearful of the future. A "flight from

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STANLEY BALDWIN

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## It Can Be Done

It is a satisfaction to know that part of the Weyerhaeuser kidnap gang have been captured. The government is still getting results. It is proving that something can be done about crime. It has broken up nearly all the notorious gangs which have been menacing American safety and blackening American honor. It has shown that the American people can check crime if they organize to do it. Of course only a beginning has been made. Only a very small per cent of the crimes are within federal jurisdiction. But the federal authorities are dealing scientifically with these few cases and they are getting results. We could apply similar methods to other fields of crime if we wanted to, and we would get similar results. We need not be a crime-ridden nation any longer than we choose. If we gave as much attention to the ever-present, dangerous, and destructive enemies who prey upon us in every neighborhood that we do to the enemies which, conceivably, may some day sweep down upon us from some foreign land, we could wipe out the criminals. If we gave thoughtful attention to the training of police and enforcement officers, if we equipped them properly, if we took them out of politics, we could put the criminals to rout. We need not stand back and say that freedom from the disgrace and danger of crime cannot be prevented. It can be done.

So it is with our other problems. We can clear them away if we set ourselves to the task intelligently. We can, for example, have clean and efficient administration. We can get away from the vicious spoils system, which is a blight upon American politics. The way has been pointed out. It is described in other columns of this paper. Our national leaders know how to take government employment out of politics. All we need to do is to insist upon it and to inaugurate the appropriate procedure; a procedure which has already been devised.

The trouble is that we sit back and say, "It can't be done." We assume that the big problems of state, local, and national life are beyond our control. Then we let things slide. But we can clean up our governments. We can make them effective. And we can deal with our perplexing economic and social questions. We need not adopt a defeatist attitude. There is scarcely a problem anywhere which is not being handled successfully somewhere. We need to study carefully the ideas of our best thinkers and the experience of the world's most advanced communities. Then we need only to act—to act with energy, courage, and resolution. An effective social and political education consists in doing just that, in securing information as to what is being done concerning our perplexing public problems, and as to the steps which should be taken in order to put into effect solutions which the best political wisdom dictates.

## Report Asks Nation to Check Patronage

**Group of Experts Urges Establishment of Career System in All Units of Government**

### NO SUCH SYSTEM NOW EXISTS

**Politicians in Control of Most Public Positions Throughout Country**

"The time has come in the history of America to adopt an entirely new public policy in the selection and appointment of men and women to carry on the day-to-day work of the government." This is the verdict reached by the Commission of Inquiry on Public Service Personnel, which recently concluded more than a year's investigation of government personnel. The Commission was composed of a group of experts whose sole objective was to search out means by which the working standards of government could be raised to higher levels. Hearings were held in cities throughout the country. Public officials, business men, educational leaders, and others were invited to attend these hearings and were asked to give their views as to what ought to be done to raise the personnel standards of our national, state, and local governments.

The Commission began its task in December, 1933, and finished it several months ago. Its report has been praised by nearly all authorities in this field. If the Commission's recommendations were to be carried out, there is little doubt but that government efficiency would soar to new high levels, that the public would be better served by government, and that public employees would be a more contented lot.

### Spoils System Condemned

To begin with, the Commission's report is emphatic in declaring that the use of the spoils system as a means of choosing public employees needs to be abolished in all branches of government — national, state, and local. Public positions, it contends, must no longer be treated as political footballs, to be kicked about from one political party to another. These positions should be filled with men and women who are mentally competent, who are well trained, and who are desirous of pursuing a life-long career in the government service. As it is now, government service does not offer ripe opportunities for a career. Most of the top positions are filled by political appointments, leaving the rank and file of government employees little chance to advance to higher levels. Hence, the cream of the intellectual and business talent of the country has, to a considerable extent, shunned government work for private business. As a result, the public business has suffered, and the government's prestige has suffered.

The Commission's report draws the conclusion, therefore, that if waste and inefficiency are to be eliminated in government offices, if public employees are to feel secure and content, if government is to cope successfully with its ever-increasing burdens and responsibilities—if all these and other desirable ends are to be attained, the spoils system of appointments to office must be driven from its historic

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THE effort to rush through Congress a bill which would temporarily extend the NRA as a skeleton organization (see THE AMERICAN OBSERVER, June 10) is being made the occasion for a consideration of the antitrust laws and their effects upon industry. An attempt is being made to put into the new law a provision that the President may suspend the antitrust laws in the case of industries which establish voluntary codes which guarantee suitable wage and hour conditions. The President cannot, since the Supreme Court decision, force codes upon industries, but he may be given authority by Congress to induce industries to maintain codes by relieving those which do so from the operation of the antitrust laws.

These laws, enacted about 40 years ago, were designed for the purpose of preventing powerful corporations from forming agreements and working together in such a way as to hurt consumers, laborers, and, in general, the public. The laws have not been well enforced. They have not prevented the centralizing of industrial power. Corporations have, to a considerable extent, succeeded in finding ways to fix prices and to enter into agreements with each other.

But business has never been satisfied with the antitrust laws. Even though not well enforced, they have always remained a thorn in the flesh. Owners of large industries have known that in many cases they were subject to prosecution under the antitrust laws if an administration should see fit to enforce the laws rigidly. No one has known for sure what he could or could not do legally on account of these laws. Business has consequently clamored for a repeal or modification of the antitrust laws. Corporation heads have felt that their companies could not get along well unless they could form voluntary agreements among themselves, and yet these agreements have usually violated the law. But those in charge of the government have felt that they could not repeal the antitrust laws and permit corporations to form agreements among themselves in an unhindered way unless there could be some assurance that they would not act contrary to the interests of consumers and workers.

The NRA appeared, two years ago, to be a way out of this dilemma. It was proposed, in effect, that the antitrust laws should be suspended and that, in return, corporations should form rules governing their conduct, rules which would guarantee reasonably fair wages and working conditions and which would protect the public.

Now the Supreme Court decision kicks over the whole program. At first there was exultation among the opponents of the administration, particularly among business men, but, on reflection, it was seen that the overthrow of the NRA put business back where it was two years ago. It is free from NRA restraints, to be sure, but it is saddled with antitrust laws, those laws which have been in existence for a generation, but which the NRA suspended in return for guarantees given by industry in the writing of their codes. Industrial leaders, or many of them, would like to form voluntary agreements. They would like to put a ban on competitive practices

hurtful to them. They would like to make price agreements. Many of these agreements, however, are now unlawful because the Supreme Court, in upsetting the codes, also threw out the provisions suspending the antitrust laws. Such is the background for the attempt which is now being made in Congress to suspend the antitrust laws under certain conditions.

#### Seaports Urge Tariff Changes

The United States cannot increase its exports unless it is willing to import more goods from other countries. This was the message delivered to the first national conference of seaport cities on international trade by Mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia of New York.

Mayor LaGuardia also suggested that seaports might aid in the revival of foreign trade by agreeing to cut down port charges. Representatives of other ports demanded a downward revision of tariffs. James D. Mooney, vice-president of the General Motors Corporation, illustrated his address to the conference by lantern slides, one picturing a huge dam built across New York harbor to block the entrance of incoming ships. He called the dam "our national tariff wall," and said that it blocked American exporting ships just as effectively as it did importing ships. The conference agreed in attacking persons "who live in the past," expecting foreigners to buy our goods when we bar theirs.

#### A New Railroad Fare

A new plan for "postalizing" the railroads, setting a regular passenger fare of \$1 and an express train passenger fare of \$3 for any distance on one railroad line, is now being considered by leading railway executives, Joseph B. Eastman, federal transportation coordinator, and Burton K. Wheeler, chairman of the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee.



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JOSEPH B.  
EASTMAN

The plan is based on the idea that railway traffic would increase if fares were reduced to this level, while the cost of operating the railway would not materially change. It is argued that New Yorkers can travel in the subway any distance from two blocks to 30 miles for a nickel, and that the post office will carry a letter 4,000 miles on the same three-cent stamp that would be used for correspondence in one city. If the railways adopt the "postal" plan, a ticket from New York to Los Angeles, exclusive of Pullman, will cost only \$6, since the passenger travels on only two lines. Sponsors of the plan believe that an increase in short haul traffic will make up the loss on long hauls.

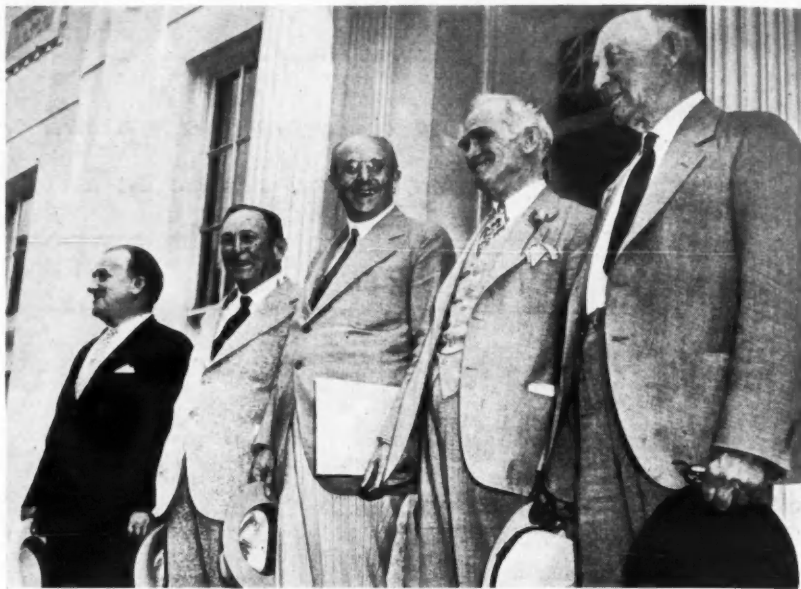
Senator Wheeler announced that if the plan could be proved practicable, he would introduce a bill sponsoring it in the Senate. Both he and Mr. Eastman are "fascinated" by the idea, but they fear that in its present form it may entail operating loss for the railroad companies. If satisfactory arrangements can be made, the companies may be insured against loss by the federal government.

#### Shriners Meet

Washington joined last week in extending a welcome to 100,000 Shriners, members of the "Ancient Arabic Order of the Mystic Shrine" of Masonry, who were meeting in convention in the nation's capital. Colorful parades and ceremonies marked the carnival spirit of the occasion, to which delegates traveled by boat, bus, and motor caravan from every state of the Union.

#### New Pacific Airport

Sand Island, a tiny dot in the middle of the Pacific, which was



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#### DEMOCRATIC LEADERS

These are the men on whom President Roosevelt relies for legislative action. As they leave the White House after conferring with the President on NRA matters, they are, left to right: Rep. John J. O'Connor, chairman of the House Rules Committee; Senator Joseph Robinson, floor leader; Attorney General Homer Cummings; Speaker Joseph Byrns; Rep. Robert Doughton, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee.

virgin jungle two months ago, is the world's first mid-ocean air base, and the newest colony under the American flag. The Pan American Airways passed over the shoals from the open sea and took possession of the scrub-matted, coral-strewn area, and after 50 days of intensive work, the island is ready to receive the first flying Clipper ships that will pioneer an aerial trade route between California and the Orient.

#### NRA and NBC

Attorney General Homer S. Cummings slipped last week in a talk to Washington newspaper men, and revealed what a large place the NRA still has in his thoughts. He was telling reporters of a radio speech he proposed to make in Connecticut, and said:

"It will be broadcast over the NRA network."

When the reporters began to laugh, Mr. Cummings reddened and corrected himself: "I mean NBC."

#### Flood Follows Drought

Large areas in Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska, which have been suffering from drought and dust storms, have a new enemy to contend with. The crest of the Kaw River flood descended on Kansas City last week, and along a nine-mile frontier dividing the flood waters from a densely populated industrial region, an army of dike workers toiled heroically to keep up the embankments. 2,500 families saw their homes disappear under water as the Kaw River joined the Missouri, or "Big Muddy," which swelled to an average width of five miles over a 100-mile stretch between Rockport and Herman, Missouri.

The loss of life reached 104 in Nebraska, eight in Kansas, and three in Missouri, and with 400,000 acres of land between St. Louis and Kansas City covered by water, the property damage is believed to have been over \$5,000,000. One day last week, the height of the Kaw River increased seven feet.

#### Arms Pact Ratified

Only one senator protested last week when the Senate ratified the 10-year-old "traffic in arms convention," which seeks to prevent the importation of arms into a country without its consent. Senator King, of Utah, opposed ratification on the ground that the pact might involve us with Iraq, which is claiming sovereignty over the Persian Gulf oil fields. His protest has been holding up Senate ratification of the pact since last year.

The convention is aimed at preventing the illegal distribution of arms and ammunition, by requiring that all shipments must be licensed and made public. A country exporting arms must obtain permission from other governments before selling arms within their borders. It has been ratified by China, Egypt, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, and Sweden. Conditional ratification has been given by the British Empire, Australia, Denmark, and France.

### THOUGHTS AND SMILES

Babies and pianos would make less noise if grown people let them alone.—*Montreal Star*

"What is the worst thing that could happen to this country?" a writer asks. For goodness' sake, hasn't it already happened?—*Washington Post*

"Men's weaknesses are often necessary to the purposes of life."

—*Maurice Maeterlinck*

Don't kick a man when he is down—he may get up!—*Louis Allis MESSENGER*

A South-Coast resort advertises a new attraction at the end of the pier for the coming season. Most resorts, however, will be content to leave the sea there as usual.—*PUNCH*

An initial difficulty in preparing shark-skin for human wear, we are informed, was to make it waterproof. Sharks must get wet through.—*PUNCH*

Count that day lost whose low descending sun views from thy hand no worthy action done.

—*Author unknown*

If tossing a dollar across the Potomac seems hard, think of spraying \$4,880,000,000 from coast to coast.—*MORNING OREGONIAN*

Louisiana has been owned by the Indians, Spain, France, the United States and Huey.—*Los Angeles TIMES*

Believe it or not, many a successful man has gone all the way through life without a motto.—*SACRAMENTO BEE*

The Constitution devotes the national domain to union, to justice, to defence, to welfare and to liberty. But there is a higher law than the Constitution.

—*William Henry Seward*

Then there is the case of the writer who sold an article on "We Are Not Slaves of the Machine!" for enough money to meet an overdue payment on his car.—*Washington Post*

"I take off my hat to the taxpayers of this country," said an official recently. That's all right, so long as he doesn't start handing it around.—*HUMORIST*

When it comes to war debts, the French have no trouble in keeping the franc where it is.—*Cincinnati ENQUIRER*

A great memory does not make a philosopher, any more than a dictionary can be called a grammar.—*Cardinal Newman*

Personally we do not doubt that recovery is sound but insist that sound is not recovery.—*Dallas MORNING NEWS*

The twelve Hauptmann jurors are said to be writing a book. What's it to be called? "Under the Big Top?"—*Norfolk LEDGER-DISPATCH*



NOW HE MUST MAKE IT HIS OWN JOB

—*Sweigert in San Francisco CHRONICLE*



# AROUND THE WORLD

**France:** France has had another cabinet change, the eleventh since the present parliament convened. The excitement in the Chamber of Deputies contrasted strongly with the peacefulness of the English shift from Nationals to Conservatives.

Pierre Laval, minister for foreign affairs in both the Flandin and Bouisson governments, has consented to head the new cabinet. Flandin fell on the issue of dictatorial power; and Bouisson, four days later, was rejected by the Chamber on this same issue.



PIERRE LAVAL

Accordingly, Laval tested his government as soon as he could, and the Chamber, by a vote of 324 to 168, granted him five-month decree powers for the present financial emergency.

Like Bouisson and Flandin, Premier Laval announced a "moderate," "defend the currency" program. But his recent success, as minister for foreign affairs, in drawing up a pact with Russia, has made him popular with the radicals in the Chamber. The left is willing to support him, even on the decree power, although they were suspicious of Flandin and Bouisson. But Laval will inherit the two major problems which have agitated the country and the Chamber, and caused the overthrow of his predecessors—an unbalanced budget and the movement for devaluation of the franc.

He announces that the path ahead for France is one of "heroic deflation." Not unless drastic economies in every department of national expenditure can be effected, Laval believes, will France be saved from an unstable currency. The budget has not been balanced for five years, and during that period a deficit of 27,000,000,000 francs (\$1,788,000,000) has accumulated. If this deficit is allowed to grow, Laval fears that the credit of the government will be undermined and that it will not be able to borrow money. This would drive the treasury to inflation, which most Frenchmen fear after their post-war experience.

Laval has been granted his request for decree power. But as soon as he cuts down the national budget, the state employees, pensioned war veterans, and those benefiting by social insurance will suffer. These groups are strongly organized, and many political observers fear that Laval's most difficult days lie ahead.

Meanwhile, the opinion persists that France may yet resort to devaluing the franc (see THE AMERICAN OBSERVER, June 10), although Laval is an announced enemy of devaluation. Many feel that the political obstacles to deflation are too great, and that Laval will be unable to balance the French budget by cutting expenditures. Instead, they say, he can balance it by cutting down the value of the franc, and do much to revive French trade in the process. But at

present the cabinet is committed to deflation, and although it is impossible to know how long Laval can keep his supporting coalition together, he has built a cabinet which should be more stable than that of Bouisson or Flandin.

France has a new man of legend: "Incredible Philibert," the former Deputy Philibert Hippolyte Marcelin Besson, who once worked in an American shipyard and now is sought by French police on a swindling charge, won an election contest by proxy last week. Besson's friend, William Archer, was chosen a deputy on the platform: "A vote for me is a vote for Besson."

Besson lost his parliamentary immunity from arrest last March when the Chamber of Deputies ousted him, and since then he has been a fugitive from the French police. Eluding his pursuers, he has managed to issue manifestoes and to address meetings of his constituents. It is doubtful that the proxy election will be held legal, but all France is interested in the result.

**Russia:** The Soviets are pushing to completion their policy of creating a "safety zone" along the Finnish frontier by moving the local Finnish population to Central Russia and substituting Russians in their place. The policy is a part of the Soviet program for national minorities in Russia. Last week, however, Finland protested to the Russian government that the Russians were "persecuting" these border Finns by driving them from their homes and forcing them into occupations for which they might not be fitted. The Finnish foreign ministry has ordered the legation in Moscow to inquire into this Soviet minority program.

**Great Britain:** Joachim von Ribbentrop, special German ambassador to discuss naval armaments with Great Britain, returned from Germany to London last week with Chancellor Hitler's approval of the terms agreed to before the Whitsuntide holiday.

Germany yielded on her demand for a 35 per cent general ratio, and accepted the British proposal for a quota of 35 per cent in each category. This is a more serious concession than first appears, since Germany had planned a small-ship navy, and with a 35 per cent ratio to all British tonnage, she would have been able to build a great number of efficient small ships. Now, however, she can build only 35 per cent as many ships of any size as the British build.

This percentage has been accepted as final for all time. Regardless of the size of other navies, Germany will limit herself to a navy 35 per cent as large as the British. Naval authorities were quick to point out that by this agreement Germany surrenders her ambition to naval parity with France. It also puts an end to the possibility, much feared in France and England, that Germany would put all her tonnage into submarines, and thus jeopardize British naval supremacy.

On the same day that the agreement was signed, the Prince of Wales made a friendly gesture toward Germany, in a speech to a large gathering of British ex-service men. He spoke with favor of a suggestion that the British Legion should send a deputation to visit Germany in the near future, to cement the satisfactory relations between the two countries which the naval agreement had advanced.

**Italy:** Premier Benito Mussolini is understood to have put a ban on the Italian press' attack on England, which grew out of the dispute between Italy and Ethiopia. Italian editors had been suggesting that the British encouraged the Ethiopians to defy Il Duce, because they were opposed to

Italy's colonial ambitions. The charge had already been denied by Captain Anthony Eden, speaking for the British government, and since the Fascist press is controlled by the Italian government, Great Britain protested directly to the premier.

**Far East:** Japan has become the master of North China. War Minister General Ho-Ying-Ching, official spokesman for the Chinese Republic, received a "final warning" from the Japanese last week, and was forced to withdraw his troops from the North Chinese area. The Chinese had massed several divisions in North China after the Japanese laid down a list of demands from China and then sent an army to Peiping and Tientsin to see that the demands were acknowledged. If Chiang Kai-Shek and the Chinese government give official approval to General Ho-Ying-Ching's agreement, it will mean that the Peiping-Tientsin area is to be dominated by the Japanese military authorities.

In the meantime, it is feared that the Chinese army may revolt against its leaders, believing that it has been betrayed by them. General Ho is understood to have ordered special precautions against mutiny when the troops learn the details of the new agreement.

For several months the Japanese have complained that the administration of North China has been discriminating against Japan. Japanese advertisements were not permitted to appear in North Chinese newspapers, and, according to the Japanese foreign office, leading Chinese officials have been engaged in anti-Japanese agitation. In Nanking, the Chinese capital, officials were positive that the present crisis would not develop into war, "because it takes two to make a quarrel."

While the negotiations between the two governments were being carried on, 13 United States destroyers and a flotilla of submarines were on their way to North Chinese waters. But the United States Navy Department officially denied that the ships had any connection with the Sino-Japanese dispute. An operations officer said that the squadron had previously been ordered to that area for gunnery practice.

**South America:** The foreign ministers of Bolivia and Paraguay have reached an agreement for a truce which may bring about a definite termination to the Chaco War. During the truce, the ministers are to begin direct negotiations to establish guarantees against the renewal of hostilities, and to provide for the demobilization of the Bolivian and Paraguayan armies. This agreement must be ratified by the governments of the two countries before it can be signed at Buenos Aires, where the conference is being held, and may not become effective until next week.

At the same time, the two ministers will try to reach an agreement on the Gran Chaco boundary dispute. Unless they can come to terms, and it is not expected that they will be able to do so, the dispute will be referred to the World Court. Both countries would then be pledged to abide by the decision. Geneva hoped that Paraguay would withdraw her resignation from the League.

**Finland:** Finnish divers are hoping that an old Russian tax-collecting ship, which went down in a storm 200 years ago off the coast of Finland, will yield a great treasure in gold and silver. The divers have sent up a collection of cannon balls, hand weapons, and old shoes, and now they have been encouraged by the discovery of gold candlesticks and jewelry. The ship, it is believed, was returning from plundering the Swedish coast, and carried a cargo of valuables for the treasury of the czar.

**Germany:** A new light on Nazi policy appeared last week when Julius Streicher, close friend of Chancellor Hitler, predicted that the Nazis would bring back Germany's colonies. Herr Streicher made the prediction in an address at the opening of Germany's colonial exhibition in Nuremberg. He said: "We have faith that our leader, who already has fulfilled so many hopes, will also realize something in the colonial question. Millions in England are favorable to a return of Germany's colonies, thereby admitting that we know how to colonize." The bulk of Germany's pre-war colonies in Africa and the East are now being administered as mandates by the British government.

According to the Foreign Policy Association, Germany's new conscript army, which is the sole bearer of arms in the Reich, will be an influence for peace. The Association believes that generals of the Wehrmacht, the new army, are still humiliated by Germany's defeat in the World War, and would oppose another war unless they were convinced of a more than even chance of winning. This, the Association says, would make any foreign adventure very difficult, as Germany could not hope to be successful in an aggressive foreign war. But the new army will have its uses, for it "gives the government endless new opportunities for the mass spectacles and parades which are necessary to occupy a people whose standard of living is rapidly deteriorating."

Richard Strauss, Germany's most distinguished operatic and orchestral conductor, appears likely to be relieved of his post as president of the Third Reich's Musical Chamber. Nazis do not conceal the fact that Strauss will be retired after the performance of his new opera, "The Silent Woman," in Dresden on June 24, because he had Stefan Zweig, a Jew, write the libretto. The libretti for the most famous Strauss operas all were written by another Jew, the late Hugo von Hoffmannsthal, but the Nazis hoped that he would choose an "Aryan" writer.



STILL HUNGRY  
—Elder man in Washington Post



## Public Opinion in the Making

### Tribute to MacDonald

When Mr. MacDonald retained his office of prime minister against opposition forces and worked with men who did not share his views, it was largely because of his devotion to the field of international affairs. A recognized authority on such matters, he hoped to make himself useful in the development of a more peaceful world. The Springfield (Mass.) *Republican* says of his work:

No more thankless field could have been chosen, and the impression of futility and frustration left at the close of Mr. MacDonald's service arises largely from the wrecking, one by one, of all his great plans to restore peace and confidence. One of his greatest achievements as Labor prime minister was in bringing about the London naval conference, but the results from that have been largely nullified by the course of events. He pinned even greater hopes on the Geneva arms conference, and no one was harder hit by its failure. The London economic conference was largely due to his efforts, and its failure was another blow. Disarmament and economic peace were the aims on which he put most stress, and the world during his years of service in a "national" government, was going the wrong way.

His failure, therefore, is mainly to be attributed to events beyond the control of any single statesman or government. It was his misfortune to be so placed that the full brunt of failure fell upon him, contributing to the decline of health which has made necessary his resignation.

### A Deeper Meaning

The Supreme Court decision on the NRA created turmoil and, at the same time, settled the turbulence with which the United States has been seething during the past several months. The Des Moines *Register* discusses the deeper significance of the decision.

For some reason the Supreme Court decision has caused the more thoughtful of American people and the press of the nation to draw up short and look around. As to the general direction in which we have been proceeding, there is naturally some difference of opinion. But it is the more futile and insignificant meanderings, which only a few months ago seemed so portentous, that interest us here.

There was, for example, the Townsend plan. The idea went down the street like a whirlwind picking up dry leaves, and for a moment it looked like a tornado.

Then there was the Rev. Father Coughlin. His "social justice" came along on a high wind, an ominous cloud that simply refused to lift high enough to adequately reveal either its threat or its promise.

Huey blew in on a march wind. It got dirt in your eyes. The bonus was a foreboding stillness. A buzzing bee put all the animals into a stampede, but the next morning the sun rose as usual.

Somehow the new issue has made all of these hysterias of the recent past suddenly look ridiculous. All at once we are thrown down to fundamentals, and everything else seems petty. Whether it is bluster of today or tomorrow is of small moment. For as we turn and face ahead again, we know that the path will wind through hundreds—thousands of days.

The weather, be it good or bad, can be met. It is the course of the road that matters.

### Work and Relief

During the past few months much criticism has been made of relief administration and investigations have been carried on in many communities. A large group of social workers believes that the blame is on the theory of work relief rather than on those who administer it. Joanna Colcord, in the June *Survey*, tells why many social authorities are beginning to believe that work should be divorced from relief.

Boiled down to essentials, the belief of this group of social workers seems to be that work relief, as we have seen it prac-

ticed in this country for the last four years, has been tried and found wanting. They would like to see work-for-relief disappear, to be replaced by constructive sheltered occupations and educational activities in which wages were not paid, carried on under the direction of relief authorities. Client participation in these enterprises would be voluntary and secured at the utmost by persuasion and explanation, never by coercion. Work-for-relief would be transformed into genuine public works, in the administration of which relief authorities would take no hand. Between the relief authority and the works authority should be interposed a strong system of public employment exchanges, bearing alone the responsibility of choice of those to be assigned to public works from among the names submitted by the relief authority as being in need of such employment. Each tub, the Committee evidently feels, should stand on its own bottom, the works authority getting whatever popular credit or criticism its performance earns for it, and the public employment service answering any public demands as to why individuals have or have not been assigned to public works. The relief authority would then be left with its own proper area to manage, subject only to the griefs inherent in trying to do a relief job well.

### "Must" Program

Fourteen points are included in President Roosevelt's "must" program which he has urged Congress to decide upon. Some important points are the social security bill, Wagner labor bill, Tennessee Valley bill, AAA extensions and the holding company bill. Most of the bills are written by official and unofficial aides of the President and are sent to Congress to be mechanically approved. The Chicago *Daily Tribune* believes that a change has taken place in our legislative form of government during the administration.

The submission of Congress to this new procedure in lawmaking is so complete as to constitute an abdication. As a legislative body Congress adjourns as soon as it assembles and the members remain either as agents of administrative program or as helpless observers of the scene. For all practical purposes one division of government has been eliminated and there remains only the executive and judicial. The latter has continued to serve its purpose, but the lawmaking body has been merged into the executive and has become a part of the process by which an executive order becomes a statute. Congress at no other time so completely accepted the theory of command performances.

### The Mania of Restriction

In the third of his *Manchester Guardian* articles on the United States, H. G. Wells, the noted British writer, criticizes crop and output reductions as a symptom of stagnation, and warns that we cannot become a self-sufficient, walled-up country:

In the face of these considerations, I can but regard this mania for restrictive controls in America and England, this drive toward underliving, as a temporary aberration, a reaction from the facile optimism of the great boom, that also will in its turn have its day and pass. In the boom years we were all talking of an age of more abundant living, of the economics of plenty, of a headlong rush upward and onward. The rush was altogether too headlong. Yet, after all, then all these things are weighed up, in the end we may find that the hope and courage of 1927-1928 were better justified than these hopeless salvage economies of 1933-1934. Then we were all for spending the gift of our talents; now too many of us are for burying them and plowing them in. Even if the American and the British prove so poor spirited as to consent to underlive, I doubt if the German, with all his faults, and the Japanese are so amenable to the claims of retrogression. They mean to live dangerously, even if they do not live greatly or generously, in their present mood at any rate. They will make the pace for us. If the Americans wall themselves in from the entire world, as the Chinese did after the Ming period and the Japanese after their first experience of Europeans, sooner or later some curious faces will come looking over the wall.

### Is Man Improving?

Surrounded with inventions and discoveries which raise our material civilization to an unparalleled plane, we seldom speculate on the progress of man. But is man himself improving? This is the subject of a discussion by Abbé Ernest Dimnet in *Scribner's* for June:

Above all, progress is nothing if it does not include character. Aply says Emerson in his disconnected but rich essay on Politics: "We think our civilization near its meridian, but we are yet only at the cock crowing and the morning star. In our barbarous civilization the influence of character is in its infancy." Recently Mr. James Truslow Adams devoted a whole essay to the development of the same idea, and it is unquestionable that our modern minds are groping towards a higher notion of progress than that bequeathed to us by the nineteenth century.

Progress today appears to be the ascent of civilization towards a level where intellectual or moral inferiority will be regarded as a calamity. The more thinkers, artists, or philanthropists will be produced, the higher will progress admittedly be. The decline of religion will not be thought, as it is by Mr. Wells, a step onwards, but as a misapprehension of the short-sighted. The treatment of the weak, including animals, will be a test.

### Constitutional Reform

The recent Supreme Court decision on the NRA made many people ask: "What about this reviewing power over the acts of Congress?" President Roosevelt has already



IT'S A RELIEF TO SEE SOMEBODY STICK TO HIS OLD STYLES  
—Kansas City Star

sounded out American opinion on the possibility of a constitutional amendment, freeing Congress from the Court. In the *New Republic*, Dean Charles E. Clark of the Yale law school comments:

Judicial review, as we now have it, leads directly to lack of ultimate responsibility on anyone for political actions taken. The Court—the last body to act—certainly does not have it, for coupled with the unpredictability of its course is the fact that by its very nature its action is at most only negative—only saying no to some other political agency. The good old American game of passing the buck is perhaps the most striking thing in our political life, whether seen in ward politics, in municipal governments (where boards of finance, most easily susceptible to hidden political control, are set to watch other boards) or in state and national politics, where executive, legislature (with two competing houses) and court all operate separately, if not antagonistically.

What is needed is a thorough reexamination of our governmental system, which shall be searching enough to weigh dispassionately such sacred relics of our colonial history as the sovereignty of our states, and which shall then press for such affirmative action with respect to constitutions and "fundamental law" as the needs of a modern political organization, capable of acting in time of crisis or otherwise in the interests of all its constituents, demand.

### Chaco Truce

No one has understood the purpose back of the three-year war in South America. Yet the people of the United States have been interested in the hostilities which claimed 100,000 casualties because the struggle seemed so unnecessary. The feeling of relief at the announcement of a temporary truce is expressed by the *Washington Evening Star*:

Neither League of Nations diplomacy nor Pan-American statesmanship has any occasion to plume itself over cessation of the war between Paraguay and Bolivia, but there is, nevertheless, cause for gratification that hostilities in the Gran Chaco have subsided, with every prospect that a 12-day truce will lead to formal peace. Each side, convinced that prolongation of the fighting would produce victory, insisted upon making more and more sacrifices of life and treasure, with the result that both the League's peace efforts and those of the neutral American states were doomed to futility.

From Buenos Aires, where peace was finally arranged, come warnings that an eleventh-hour hitch may yet wreck the work of pacification, but popular rejoicings in both Paraguay and Bolivia leave no doubt that the peoples of the two countries, who have paid so dearly, crave a final and irrevocable ending of the sanguinary and senseless strife. It is almost inconceivable that either the statesmen or the military authorities of the belligerent states, having found it possible to arrange a truce, would have the criminal foolhardiness to let it drift into renewed warfare.

The people and government of the United States, deeply concerned in the welfare of all the Americas, rejoice that conflict in the Chaco has terminated and hope sincerely that it is really peace and not merely an armistice.



—Columbus Citizen  
FORTUNATELY, STATE LINES DON'T STOP THIS ARM

### THE AMERICAN OBSERVER

A Weekly Review of Social Thought and Action

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## Among the New Books

**"The Case for Manchoukuo,"** by George Bronson Rea (New York: D. Appleton Century. \$3.50).

We should be hesitant to recommend this book if there had not already appeared an adequate number of rebuttals. The fact is, however, that Japan's invasion of Manchuria has been so repeatedly denounced that it might be well to look at the other side, if there is truly another side. If there is actually a "case for Manchoukuo," Mr. Rea should be the best equipped person to present it by virtue of his position with the government of Manchoukuo. He is counselor to the ministry of foreign affairs of that country.

Practically every conceivable argument bolstering the Japanese case and the case for world recognition of the independent status of Manchoukuo is mustered by this author. The telling influence of economic factors in the present Far Eastern situation, the geographical position of Communist Russia, the rivalry of western nations in the Orient; all these and many other factors are developed fully by the author. This is an important book, if for no other reason than its attempt to present one side of a highly controversial problem of international relations.

**"Hasta La Vista: or a Postcard from Peru,"** by Christopher Morley (New York: Doubleday Doran. \$2).

Christopher Morley is one of the most charming of our light essayists. In this little book he records, in random fashion, the day book of his voyage to the land of the Incas. Mr. Morley calls his book a study in "economics," and so in some measure it is, since he occupies himself with genial comparisons of the British and North American trade interests in Peru. But it is also full of humorous insights into literature, Mr. Morley's first love. The reader will find in this postcard from Peru much that is interesting and important about Spanish America; he will find also much that is relevant to life alone.

**"Greenwich Village: 1920-1930. A Comment on American Civilization in the Post-War Years"** (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. \$4).

Those who are interested in sociological problems and changes will delight in Caroline F. Ware's case study of a particular section of America's largest city which, in its broader and more fundamental aspects, is representative of urban civilization throughout the entire country.

The outstanding merit of this book is its exhaustive character. Miss Ware and the countless social workers and research assistants who gathered data for the book have gone into every phase of life in Greenwich Village as completely as possible. What will probably appeal to most readers at first glance will be the section on the "Villagers," the artists and bohemians who have made Greenwich Village so romantic. But these people make up a small minority of the Village's population, as the author properly emphasizes. It is with the native inhabitants, the Irish, the Germans, and the Jews, with whom the book is also concerned, with their politics, their social problems, and the changes through which they passed during the post-war decade. "Greenwich Village" is a book which is likely to stand the test of time and which should find a place on the shelves of all American libraries.

**"Spy,"** by Bernard Newman (New York: D. Appleton and Century. \$2.50).

This is the story of a young Englishman who "escaped" as a fleeing Teuton prisoner into Germany, and became a member of the enemy intelligence division at German headquarters on the western front. During the greater part of the war, he was able to render invaluable service to England because of this clever ruse. Naturally, getting a German intelligence job was only the beginning of Bernard Newman's adventures. Once he made a lightning trip

home to England, to prevent the assassination of Lloyd George by a German fanatic. Throughout, he writes excitingly and modestly. Although he announces that he is going to "debunk" the work of war spies, which is often told far too romantically, his own story shows once more that truth can be not only stranger, but more breathless than fiction.

**"Milton,"** by Hilaire Belloc (Philadelphia: Lippincott. \$4).

Hilaire Belloc is one of the most prolific writers of biography in the English language. The subject of his latest book is John Milton. As in his earlier works, "Richelieu," "Cromwell," and dozens of others, Mr. Belloc strikes a happy balance between the personal and the public character of his subject. Thus, we find here not only a sympathetic and complete picture of Milton the man, with his domestic problems, and Milton, one of the greatest lyric poets of all time, but of Milton, the politician, spokesman for the Puritan cause, and supporter of the Cromwellians. Although this is not to be considered the definitive biography of Milton, it is nevertheless one which is both worth while and enjoyable.

## Changes Take Place in Britain's Cabinet

(Concluded from page 1, column 1)

the pound" got under way; that is, investors were exchanging their paper pounds for gold and were shipping the gold out of the country. It appeared that England would soon be obliged to go off the gold standard.

So it was a difficult crisis which confronted Ramsay MacDonald and his Labor government. A clamor began for a reduction of the government's expenses. Conservatives everywhere were insisting that the amount of money paid to the unemployed be cut down in order that the government's finances might be strengthened. What should MacDonald and his government do about it? This was a hard problem for a government which was avowedly pro-labor and socialist to deal with. It put MacDonald in a difficult position. For a long time he had been an acknowledged leader of the common people. He had been a pacifist and had suffered terribly because of it. During the war he was virtually an outcast. He also suffered unpopularity because of his socialistic principles, but he set to work to build the Labor party, a party which was determined gradually to transform England into a so-

cialist commonwealth. He continued to stand for pacifism and socialism. He helped to build the Labor party to a position so strong that it was able to assume control of the government in 1923. This Labor cabinet, under his premiership, lasted less than a year. Then Stanley Baldwin, who had been premier before, came back into power, and his government lasted for more than four years. In 1929, MacDonald and his socialistic Laborites again came into office. They did not have a majority in Parliament, but they had more votes than either the Conservatives or the dwindling Liberals.

### The Crisis of 1931

Such was Ramsay MacDonald's background. Now he was asked to cut down the payments which were being made to the unemployed in order to strengthen the government's finances. Most of his associates in the cabinet said that this should not be done. They thought that England should go off the gold standard if necessary, that the pound should be devalued, but that the governmental expenditures should go on. They insisted upon a policy somewhat like that which a few years later President Roosevelt was to advocate in the United States. The government should spend money to prevent distress among the masses, should put purchasing power into the hands of the people, and should not worry if the country went off the gold standard. It was even held that it would be a good thing to go off gold, as this would cause prices to rise and would help those who were having a hard time to pay their debts.

The Conservatives, among whom nearly all the business classes were included, very strongly opposed such views. They held that England should remain on gold and that expenses should be curtailed. They declared that if the country should go off gold, inflation would result, and they pictured to the people the possibility of a situation like that which prevailed in Germany in 1922 and 1923. They predicted that unless stringent measures were taken, the wild inflation which would result would bring chaos and would destroy the savings of the English people.

Between these points of view Ramsay MacDonald had to decide, and he cast his lot with the Conservatives. This meant a break with the party which he had done so much to build. Nearly all the Laborites deserted him. He and his cabinet resigned. Then a so-called "National" cabinet was formed. It was composed of members of all the parties. Although Conservatives predominated, Ramsay Mac-

Donald was continued as prime minister, but most of the prominent Conservative leaders were given places in the cabinet. A few Liberals and Laborite followers of MacDonald were included. After a while, an election was held and this National government, which was a thinly disguised Conservative government, won an overwhelming victory.

### New Developments

The switching of the government into the Conservatives' hands did not, however, prevent England from going off the gold standard. The country went off gold in September, 1931. The pound was devalued, but no great catastrophe occurred. In fact, many people still believe that the country benefited. It was easier

for foreigners to exchange their currency for British money and hence to buy British goods. Since that time, British export trade has shown healthy increases. The Conservatives did, however, restrict payments to the unemployed.

Politically the situation has been somewhat unstable. The Conservatives, representing a position somewhat similar to that of moderate Republicans and fairly conservative Democrats in the United States, speaking generally for the business and professional interests and a large section of the rural population and of the shop-keeping middle classes, have been in control. The strongest personal force in the cabinet has been Stanley Baldwin, a scholarly and thoughtful manufacturer who also has agricultural interests. Baldwin is something of a philosopher and is strictly honest. Personally, he has the confidence of the people, but he has never been a flashy or brilliant statesman. In fact, during his earlier premierships, he appeared sometimes to be something of a blunderer in politics. But he is regarded as a safe and substantial man. MacDonald exerted a declining influence. His day of power was over from the time that he broke with his party. The members of the Labor party regarded him as a traitor. Conservatives tolerated him since they wished to give the appearance of maintaining a nonpartisan government, but they did not look to him for leadership.

### Little Change Expected

It is unlikely that there will be much change in policy as a result of the shift from MacDonald to Baldwin. The Conservatives, or Tories, will steer a moderate course. They are not nearly so conservative as the extreme conservatives among the Democrats and Republicans in the United States. They stand for almost as great a measure of governmental regulation of industry as President Roosevelt does. Lately they have adopted a somewhat more generous course in the payment of benefits to the unemployed.

In the field of foreign relations the change of government will probably bring about a somewhat firmer program. Sir Samuel Hoare will be stiffer in his opposition to German plans for a resumption of power than Sir John Simon was. Prime Minister Baldwin has recently advocated closer relationships between Great Britain and the United States. He hinted at the desirability of an alliance between the two countries. Probably he will try to bring about an understanding between the two English-speaking nations by which they will stand together against the encroachments of Japan in China. The new government will probably support the League of Nations more strongly than the MacDonald government did. But no great change of British policy, either domestic or foreign, is to be expected, for the change in the government in London has been more nominal than real.



RAMSAY MACDONALD © Acme



HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT FROM THE AIR

© Wide World



## (Continued from page 1, column 4)



(Concl. on p. 7, col. 4)





THESE three imaginary students have been meeting each week on this page to talk things over. The same characters are continued from week to week. We believe that readers of THE AMERICAN OBSERVER will find it interesting to follow these discussions week by week and thus to become acquainted with the three characters. Needless to say, the views expressed on this page are not to be taken as the opinions of the editors of THE AMERICAN OBSERVER.

**John:** What do you think of the sentiments expressed by the Republicans who held their meeting in Springfield, Illinois, last week?

**Mary:** I think that the speeches made there were very disappointing. They weren't at all constructive. A number of charges were made against President Roosevelt, mostly charges which cannot be sustained. That is about all that the speakers and the resolutions committee did.

**John:** It strikes me that the charges made against the President are quite fair and that they can easily be sustained. How about the charges to the effect that he ignored nearly all his campaign promises? He said, for example, that he would reduce government expenses by 25 per cent, that the government would quit borrowing money if he became president, and balance the budget—and look what happened! Governmental expenses have been greatly increased, and the budget is far more out of balance than ever. He has gone directly contrary to what he promised.

**Mary:** Of course, Mr. Roosevelt could not foresee what condition the country would be in when he became president. Conditions became very much worse between the time of his election and the time that he was inaugurated. By the end of the Hoover administration, conditions were so bad that the President had to do things which he hadn't contemplated before. That accounts for many of the expensive governmental activities. It accounts for many of the increases in expenditure.

**Charles:** Of course, Mary, you can't get away from the fact that Mr. Roosevelt did make a good many foolish promises in 1932. It was a silly thing to promise to reduce government expenditures by a fourth. Any sane person could see that the unemployed would have to be cared for and that the government would have to borrow a great deal of money or else greatly increase taxes.

**John:** And that is not the worst violation of party promises the President has made. He promised a sound currency, and we went off the gold standard. Furthermore, he has done many things since he became President that were not indicated at all when he was a candidate. He has tried to regulate industry in a way which was not mentioned during the campaign. He has carried through a huge plan of crop restriction. He is spending money by the billions. He has subordinated Congress to the executive, and is threatening to amend the Constitution and do away with states' rights. All this is quite foreign to the promises he made when he was a candidate.

**Mary:** I deny that it is foreign at all. He didn't outline all his policies in detail every time he made a speech, but anyone who read his San Francisco address during the campaign could see the direction in which he was going. That address foreshadowed every important step the President has taken. It indicated that he would take drastic measures to establish industrial security and industrial democracy. If people didn't read that speech, it was their own fault.

**John:** How about sound money?

**Charles:** Well, as to that, John, I am not so sure that the President violated any pledges. Isn't our money as sound today as it was in the Hoover days?

**John:** Haven't we gone off the gold standard, and haven't we devalued the dollar?

**Charles:** Yes, but what of it? The dollar is just as steady in its buying power now as it was then. A dollar is sound when it buys about as much one time as another. Then it can be depended upon. The value of the dollar isn't fluctuating any more now than it was in the 1920's.

## Talking Things Over

### Has President Roosevelt Kept to His Campaign Promises or Has He Introduced Unexpected Changes Which Endanger Our Government?

It isn't fluctuating as much as it did from 1929 to 1933. The dollar wasn't sound or safe in the Hoover days because the country was in such a fix that no one knew but that utter catastrophe was coming. Catastrophe seems less probable today than it did three years ago and the dollar is just as sound and as stable as it was then—in fact far more so.

**John:** I don't agree with you, and I don't think most of the people do. In everyone's mind there is the fear that we will have inflation, now that the dollar is no longer tied to gold.

**Mary:** I feel quite certain that there is no more fear now than there was in the last days of the Hoover administration. I am certain that there is not anything like as much fear as there was when all the banks of the country were closing.

**John:** Well, since we can't agree on that point, what about the attack the Roosevelt administration is making on the Constitution? I thought former Governor Lowden made a great speech at the Springfield convention. He closed with the paragraph:

Long ago an eminent American called our government an "indissoluble union of indestructible states." The Republican party, under the leadership of Abraham Lincoln, made the first half of this statement come true. The Union was not dissolved, and men North and South now rejoice that this is so. But the task it undertook then is only half done. It is now proposed by amendment of the Constitution to test the latter half of that statement. Are the states indestructible? Around that issue the battle rages. And I have faith that when the people have spoken we shall still have an "indissoluble union of indestructible states."

**Mary:** Just what do you mean by talking about preserving a union of indestructible states? What wants to destroy the states?

**John:** President Roosevelt has clearly indicated that he favors a constitutional amendment which will give the national government power over business which is wholly within any one state. If that is done there won't be much left of states' rights. The national government will take over everything.

**Charles:** Now see here, John. I have agreed with you on some points. I agree that President Roosevelt made some pretty foolish promises during the 1932 campaign and all that, but this talk about overthrowing the government and doing away with the Constitution sounds to me pretty thin.

**John:** Don't you think there is a real movement in that direction?

**Charles:** No, I don't. Let's look facts in the face. Just what is all this rumpus about the Constitution? The President has suggested that the federal government ought to have more power over concerns

which do an interstate business. Let's see what that means. Let's get away from generalities and get down to concrete facts. For example, we have the coal industry. Everyone agrees that it is very sick. There are hundreds of little coal mines situated in at least a dozen states. Every owner wants to produce all that he can. For part of the year he has men working, producing coal. Hundreds of others in different states are doing the same thing. After a while there is a surplus of coal, more than can be sold. Then men have to be thrown out of work. Mines lie idle. Miners' families suffer almost to the point of starvation. Hundreds of thousands of people are affected miserably by that condition today.

Now comes a question—what are we going to do about it? Ought either state governments or the national government to step in and regulate the coal industry? Ought they to do something to get it on its feet? If so, who is to do it? The dozen or so different state governments or the national government? Isn't it, after all, a national problem which can be dealt with only by the national government? If it is necessary that the national government deal with the problem, we now come to the next question. Does Congress have power, under the Constitution as interpreted by the recent Supreme Court decision, to deal with the coal industry? If it doesn't have power, how can the Constitution be amended in such a way as to give the national government power to handle an industry of that kind without, at the same time, taking away any of the essential rights of the states?

That is the question which President Roosevelt has raised. It is a question which is before the American people today. Now isn't it utterly silly and demagogic to try to make out that one who raises questions of that kind is trying to overthrow the government and to do away with the states?

**Mary:** I would say that people who howl about destroying the states when problems like that are raised are either practicing a kind of demagoguery which would make Huey Long blush or else they are disgracefully muddle-headed.

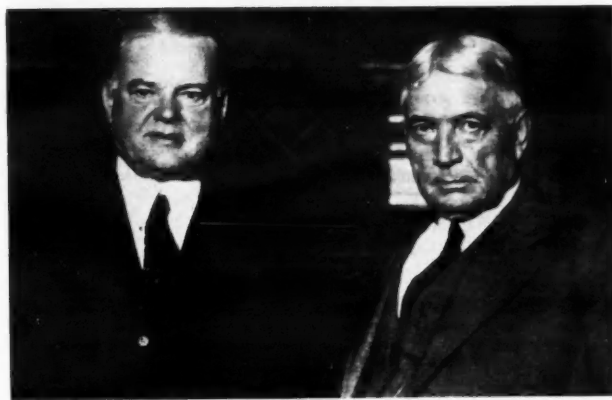
**John:** Well, at the risk of being thought muddle-headed or demagogic, I will have to say that I don't agree with you. In the first place, it will be very hard to draw up an amendment which would give the federal government power to regulate industries wholly within a state without giving the power to usurp practically all the authority of the states. Furthermore, such an amendment as you speak of would be only an entering wedge. After a while the national government would have full charge of education and health and problems of employment. It is already getting into the field of crime control. Where is it going to stop?

**Mary:** On the matter of crime, I would like to ask you this question: Are you sorry that the national

government is getting into that field? Are you sorry that the federal government, during the last year, has punished nearly all the kidnappers who have undertaken to play their hideous game and that it has broken up nearly all the big gangster rings?

**John:** No, of course I am not sorry of that, but at the same time, I do not want the national government to encroach, step by step, upon the states until the local governments have nothing left to do. I believe there is a real danger of that unless we put brakes on the movement which is going in that direction.

**Mary:** Well, I wish we had a little more time. I would like to ask why the Spring-



BEFORE THE MIDWEST CONFERENCE  
Herbert Hoover and Frank O. Lowden, former governor of Illinois, as they discussed plans for the Springfield "grass roots" conference.

field conference didn't do something more than criticize the administration—why it didn't have some constructive measures to suggest, but I must go now, so I will have to leave that question for a later discussion.

## CIVIL SERVICE REFORM

(Concluded from page 6)

It is impossible, of course, to discuss the Commission's entire report in the brief space of this article. Here are, however, a few other high points of the report: 1. A career system should be closely geared to our educational system. Colleges should offer more courses of training in civil service. 2. Close co-operation should be effected among the federal, state, and local personnel administrations. 3. In order that there may be careers in local government service, with promotion from city to city, or county to county, local residence requirements should be done away with. Such requirements have not, as a rule, been applied to school teachers or private business, and there is no good reason for such restrictions to be placed on public employees.

### Further Recommendations

While some may criticize certain specific features of the Commission's career program, few will deny the crying need for drastic civil service reform. Thinking citizens everywhere, either through private or group action, should bring pressure to bear upon their legislative bodies to enact enlightened civil service laws—laws which will look in the direction of a vital career system. Considerable action along this line is already being taken. The National League of Women Voters has begun a two-year nationwide crusade for improvement of the civil service. In Illinois 30 civic organizations have formed a Joint Committee on the Merit System to study ways of improving public personnel standards in that state. And in a large number of other places progress is being made.

A good word should also be spoken for the United States Civil Service Commission, under the able leadership of Harry B. Mitchell, Mrs. Lucille Foster McMillin, and Leonard D. White. It is doing everything within its present power to raise personnel standards in the national government and to bring about a closer co-operation between its work and that of the nation's local governments. But the campaign of civil service reformers will amount to little unless a large body of public opinion becomes sufficiently aroused over the present state of affairs to demand the complete overthrow of the spoils system.



THESE WILL COME IN HANDY!

—Doyle in the Philadelphia Record





OF THE numerous changes that the American people have witnessed since the turn of the century none have affected the everyday life of the individual citizen more deeply than those which have occurred in the field of communication. Traditional patterns of life have been vastly altered as a result of these changes. Ways of thinking and acting have been standardized and American culture

### Individuals affected by communication changes

has been leveled to an incredible extent as the newer and more perfected means of communication have been brought into play. In sum, the individual has been brought into closer contact, direct and indirect, with the rest of the world than ever before in the history of mankind.

In order to appreciate the tremendous implications of the changed era in communication one has only to glance at the various agencies that have been placed at man's disposal during the last generation. The advent of the automobile and its almost universal use by the population at large has served to wipe out distance and to break down the barriers which formerly confined people to their local communities. The airplane has enabled people to span the continent between dawn and dusk. Improvements in railway transportation have shortened the distance between coast and coast by days. Telegraphic and telephonic communication has developed apace, so that the establishment of indirect personal contact between various sections of the country has become only a matter of minutes or even seconds. Finally, there appeared on the scene two agencies which have done perhaps more than all the others combined to standardize thought and action among the masses: the radio and the motion picture. All these media have affected the individual American in such a way that his outlook on life and his behavior have been vitally altered.

The agencies of communication which command our attention may be classed in two major groups, those which enable individuals to establish direct physical contact with others, such as the airplane, the automobile, and the railroad, and those which afford indirect contact between individuals, such as the telegraph, the telephone, the radio, and the motion picture. Each of these groups affects the population vitally, altering many of its patterns of life and behavior. We shall consider some of the major consequences of each of these changes in communication.

IN THE field of transportation, the most important change has been the advent of the automobile. Never before in the history of the world have the opportunities for travel been so great as they are at the present time.

### Cheap transportation available to the masses

With one motor car for about every four people in the country, individuals are no longer tied to their local communities as they were a decade or two ago. Americans have truly become "travel-minded." Travel, for short or long distances, has become the habit of a majority of the population. This enables people to come into direct contact with individuals of other localities, to comprehend their mental attitudes and habits of behavior. In a word, it tends to make the travelers more national minded than was possible before the day of the cheap automobile.

The other major agencies of transportation, the railroad and the airplane, have similarly extended the field of man's contacts, although not to such a perceptible extent as the automobile. Long-distance travel by plane or rail has not yet been made available to the masses. The principal effect of these developments has been to create

## Mass Behavior and Communication

By David S. Muzzey and Paul D. Miller

an economic problem of large proportions. What is commonly known as the "railroad problem" has arisen as a result of the competition for passenger traffic by the busses, the airplanes, and the private automobiles. Consequently many of the railroad lines have been forced to discontinue their services and others have been placed in grave financial difficulties. In many cases, the railroads have met their problems realistically, altering their policies in such a way as to meet the new competition. In some respects, the railroad problem is beyond the control of the individual companies and calls for governmental action. Attempts are now being made to bring trucks and busses and other competitors under the same governmental regulation that controls the acts and policies of the railroads. But, in its broader sense, this problem is more economic than social and need not concern us further at this time.

Important as these facilities for mobility of person have been upon our national life, they have influenced our national behavior to a lesser degree than several other agencies of communication which have been established and perfected during the last few years. As the authors of the chapter on communication in "Recent Social Trends" point out:

An interconnected system of communication has come into existence whereby the individual is enabled at scarcely a moment's notice to place himself in contact with almost any other person in the nation. Speed and distance concepts, again, have been totally recast. No longer do men in any part of the world live to themselves alone. For an increasing majority in the United States, and for a substantial fraction in the whole western world, the telephone bell is always potentially within earshot, the postman and telegraph messenger are just around the corner and the cable and wireless may bring messages which are dated the day after they are received.

Agencies of mass impression subject the individual to stimuli of sight and sound that may serve to make him think and act, in some measure, like millions of his fellows.

With the concentration of these agencies the control over his behavior is increased.

IN THE agencies of communication which most vitally influence thought and behavior—the motion picture, the radio, the newspaper—there has been a tendency during recent years which cannot be overlooked by those who would grasp the true social implications of these media. That is the growing concentration of control in the hands of a few individuals or concerns. The motion picture industry is largely in the hands of a few powerful producers. Most of the radio broadcasting is controlled by two national chains. Likewise, the small individual newspaper publisher has been replaced by the giant publisher who controls chains from coast to coast.

While it cannot be said that this concentration of control has been used—except in a few isolated cases—for the purposes of furthering special causes or interests, the possibility of such use in the future should always be recognized. Since most of the revenue of the newspaper and the radio is derived from advertising, it is only natural that these media of communication should reflect the views and support the interests of the advertisers. Thus, on

controversial issues, where the clash of interests between various sections of the population is real and vital, one might expect the communication agencies to throw their weight on the side of those groups which give them the lion's share of their revenue.

On the other hand, there are decided advantages which accrue from the present set-up in these particular fields of communication. More than ever before, the individual is brought into closer touch with the world at large. Whereas in former times most of his news or information concerned itself with the affairs of his local community, at present every corner of the world is brought daily into his home. The press associations, the syndicated news services, have grown in size and importance since the turn of the century. Developments in the national capital are handled so completely each day that the individual citizen is brought into much closer contact with his government than ever before. Similarly, the proportion of news coming from overseas has increased with astonishing rapidity with the passing of the years and the establishment of more perfect communication facilities.

ALL THIS tends to standardize thought throughout the nation. It has a tendency to narrow the gap between the different cultural groups of the population, for, the cultural advantages which were once available only to the elect are today given to the masses. This is particularly true of the radio. "Recent Social Trends" calls attention to this phenomenon in the following terms:

Certain it is that the radio tends to promote cultural leveling. Negroes barred from entering universities can receive instruction from the same institutions by radio; residents outside of the large cities who never have seen the inside of an opera house can become familiar with the works of the masters; communities where no hall exists large enough for a symphony concert can listen to the largest orchestras of the country; and the fortunes of a Negro comedy pair can provide social talk throughout the nation. Isolation of backward regions is lessened by the new agency of communication, and moreover by short wave transmission national as well as local isolation is broken, for events in foreign nations are thereby brought to the United States. The radio, like the newspaper, has widened the horizons of the individual, but more vitally, since it makes him an auditory participant in distant events as they transpire and communicates to him some of the emotional values which inhere in them.

### Thought and action have become standardized

JUST what the future results of the use of these instruments will be no one can predict. Already they have tended to standardize human thought and behavior. It has already been hinted that they might at some future time be used to influence public thought toward selfish ends, as they have already been in the countries under dictatorial government. "Mass impression on so vast a scale has never before been possible," declare the authors of the chapter on communication in "Recent Social Trends. "The effects produced may now be quite unpremeditated, although the machinery opens the way for mass impression in keeping with special ends, private or public. The individual, the figures show, increasingly utilizes these media, and they inevitably modify his attitudes and behavior. What these modifications are to be depends entirely upon those who control the agencies. Greater possibilities for social manipulation, for ends that are selfish or socially desirable, have never existed. The major problem is to protect the interests and welfare of the individual citizen."

What the future may hold in store

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Something to Think About

1. What civil service reforms do you consider to be most urgent in order to establish a career system in government service? What, in your opinion, is standing in the way of these reforms?
2. Do you believe that patronage is an essential feature of our party system of government? Why?
3. Are most of the public positions in your county given out on a basis of merit or on a purely political basis? What is the situation with your state government?
4. What is the essential difference between the recent cabinet change which has taken place in Great Britain and those which have occurred in France? Why may it be said that Great Britain really underwent no cabinet crisis?
5. What are the principal policies for which the Conservatives of England, as represented by Prime Minister Baldwin, stand for? How do they differ from those of Ramsay MacDonald?
6. In what particular field of foreign relations might Great Britain and the United States cooperate to the benefit of both countries?
7. How was Pierre Laval able to obtain a vote of confidence of the Chamber of Deputies when his two predecessors, Flandin and Bouisson, failed on the same issue?

8. What, in your opinion, is the advantage of the voluntary NRA agreements now contemplated by the Roosevelt administration?

9. How have changes in the agencies and facilities of communication during the last quarter of a century affected human thought and behavior in this country?

10. Do you think the attack on the Roosevelt administration made by the Republicans at Springfield was justified by the facts?

REFERENCES: (a) Washington. *Saturday Evening Post*, May 11, 1935, p. 36. (b) Great Opportunity: Mr. Baldwin and the Next General Election. *Nineteenth Century and After*, May, 1935, pp. 524-532. (c) Sad Tale of Ramsay Mac. *American Mercury*, November, 1934, pp. 323-328. (d) Revolt Against Complacency. *Nation*, December 5, 1934, pp. 641-642.

PRONUNCIATIONS: Philibert Hippolyte Marcellin Besson (fee'lee-bair ee-po-leet' mar-sel-lan' bes'son—both o's as in go), Pierre Laval (pee-air' lah-vahl'), Flandin (flon-dan'), Bouisson (boo-ee-son—o as in go), Peiping (pay'ping'), Tientsin (tin'tsin), Julius Streicher (yool'yooos shtri'kair—i as in ice), Nuremberg (noo'rem-bairg), Wehrmacht (vair'mahkt).